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## BOOK DEPARTMENT

*A full description of the books received, giving size, price, etc., will be found in the list of "Publications Received" in this issue, or, generally, in a preceding issue of the SCHOOL REVIEW.*

*History for Ready Reference.* By J. N. LARNED. With maps, etc., by ALAN C. REILEY. In Five Imperial Volumes. Volume I, A to Elva. C. A. Nichols Co., Springfield, Mass., 1894. Price \$25 to \$37.50.

It is a pleasure to welcome so valuable a work as *History for Ready Reference*. The editor's eminent experience as librarian would lead us in advance to expect a book with all the virtues as a reference work. The plan followed in making the book is the same which the editor has followed in assisting students, namely that of referring them not only to the best authors but to the chapter and page of those authors where the information needed was to be found. At least, it was this part of his work that suggested the plan, but the work itself does better than this. It brings together in compact form the exact words of the authors themselves, selected with great care and treated with all proper respect. Every precaution known to the editor has been taken to insure the fact that the author's words shall not be liable to misinterpretation from any abridgment that may have been found necessary. This shows perhaps well enough how different the work is from an encyclopædia. An example will show the plan of the work even better. Let us take Athens. This forms really a chapter covering forty-two pages. The article is carefully subdivided into great historical periods, but it is not a monograph by any one author or editor. On the contrary, there are extracts from perhaps twenty-five different works with references to many more. The extracts selected and the references given cover all of the great writers of Grecian history including Thucydides, Xenophon, Plutarch, Grote, Thirlwall, Finlay, Freeman, Mahaffy, Gibbon, Cox, and Oman; the great Germans, Curtius, Niebuhr, Mommsen, Ranke; and such recent writers as E. Abbott, Percy Gardner, C. T. Cruttwell, Butcher, Fowler; and specialists (earlier and later), Aristotle, Sir Henry S. Maine, Wachsmith, E. Zeller, Violet le Duc. The whole is doubtless the completest and most authoritative account of Athens in the same number of pages to be found anywhere and as a guide for further historical study it is simply invaluable. But the article contains more than this. There is a logical outline of Athenian and Greek history in which the dominant influences are distinguished by colors according to the original plan of the editor. There is a clear plan of Athens, a

map of the harbor and a good plan of an Athenian house, a table of contemporaneous events to the end of the Peloponnesian war, and another covering the third and fourth centuries B. C. Another particularly interesting article of the first volume is that on Education. It covers no less than seventy-five pages, its range going from the earliest records of education in Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, China, Persia, and Judea down to the most recent movements for University Extension in the United States. The amount of information in this article is surprising. It is difficult to think of any phase of the history of education on which one does not find here the best word of the best author. There is no question whatever that the editor of the work knows well who the best authors are. Perhaps enough has been said to give an idea of the scope and plan of the work. This incomplete description had best be closed by a hearty recommendation of the work to all who are interested in history or who need a work of historical reference. Especially does it seem invaluable to school libraries. It cannot fail to take rank as a standard work of reference and one of the most useful of its class.

C. H. Thurber

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## CURRENT EDUCATIONAL LITERATURE

*The New York State University.* By WILLIAM CROSWELL DOANE, Bishop of Albany. North American Review, June, 1894.

Large as is the title of the Department of Public Instruction, it has been heretofore held and handled as meaning, what it really does mean by the law of its creation, the office which superintends *the elementary schools* as distinguished from that which, in the language of the law, has charge of "all education in advance of common elementary branches." The present incumbent of the office is evidently disposed to stretch the title to the farthest reach of its broad language, as compelling him to superintend *all* the Public Instruction in the State, including the University. The occupant of this position, elected to it by whatever political party may have the majority of votes in the election year, is, *ex-officio*, a Regent of the University. I am sorry to say that, unlike his predecessor, but like some of his other official colleagues in the Board, Mr. Crooker never attends its meetings. Perhaps he would be wiser if he did. Perhaps his official recognition of the Regents would be less grudging and more generous if, as an *ex-officio* member, he were more familiar with the workings in the University. Certain it is that the officers of the Univer-